



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

May 5, 2006

News Release

ICE arrests 3 illegal aliens at Tyndall Air Force Base

-Arrests part of ICE's critical infrastructure protection mission-

PANAMA CITY – Three men were arrested here earlier this week by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents following the discovery of their illegal presence in the country by military personnel working at the base's main gate.

The men, all citizens of Mexico, were employed by a sub-contractor to do scaffolding work at the military base.

Military personnel immediately contacted ICE to verify the status of those seeking entry into the facility. ICE special agents from the Office of the Resident Agent-in-Charge in Pensacola responded to the scene and confirmed that the men were illegally present in the country and did not possess employment authorizations.

The three men were taken into custody for administrative immigration violations. One of the subjects was in possession of a fraudulent resident alien card. His case was presented to the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida and criminal prosecution was accepted. The other two individuals were placed into administrative removal proceedings for the immigration violations. They were served Notices to Appear before an immigration judge at a later date.

"We are committed to working with our law enforcement partners in shutting down national security and public safety vulnerabilities," said Robert W. Weber, special agent-in-charge in Tampa. "Due to the vigilance of military personnel at Tyndall and their coordination with ICE, we were able to take immediate action by intercepting these individuals prior to breaching security at the military installation."

In accordance with ICE's homeland security mission, ICE prioritizes worksite enforcement efforts by focusing on investigations related to critical infrastructure, national security and employers who engage in egregious criminal violations. Unauthorized workers employed in sensitive security sites and critical infrastructure facilities -- such as military installations, airports, nuclear power and chemical plants and defense contractors -- are vulnerable to exploitation by terrorists, smugglers, traffickers or other criminals.

This enforcement action was part of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a comprehensive multi-year plan launched by the Department of Homeland Security to secure America's borders and reduce illegal migration. Under SBI, Homeland Security seeks to gain operational control of both the northern and southern borders, while re-engineering the detention and removal system to ensure that illegal aliens are removed from the country quickly and efficiently.

SBI also involves strong interior enforcement efforts, including enhanced worksite enforcement investigations and intensified efforts to track down and remove illegal aliens inside this country.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.